

May 18, 1971

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Dear Hal,

Today I received your letter and it prompted me to sit down at my typewriter and reply to the questions you raised in your letter.

I read the Kaplan piece in the NY Times Book Review of 5/2 and considered the choice of Kaplan by the Times as a deliberate effort on their part to render your book as a product of what Kaplan, himself, termed the "silly season" on assassination conspiracies. After all, there are more than enough lawyers around for the Times to have a go at you and certainly enough professors of law to still whatever protests might have been raised by your book.

Naturally Kaplan did not address himself to a single error in your book (and could he not have delegated this responsibility to his law students a la Liebler style?) and it seemed almost ludicrous that at one point in his review he seemed to be saying that - well, yes it could just well be that Ray was involved in a conspiracy but we will never, ever know for certain now that it is all over, anyway. Of course, Professor Kaplan's notion of justice is not whether the truth emerges in our adversary system of proceedings (I used to think this was the case) but really only that the trappings of the court room remain intact regardless of the outcome of a trial. It is a lot like saying that the operation was a success but the patient died. Truth is what it's all supposed to be about, Alfie, as they say. Not doubt-but truth as Kaplan knows only too well. I don't blame Kaplan for wanting to duck confronting you - I really doubt that he is informed at a ~~xxx~~ level he could discuss the basic points in your book.

This recalls to mind (and here I am relying on my memory which may be faulty) that Epstein once told me that he had directly accused Kaplan of being with the CIA and that Kaplan did not offer a negative reply. No, it wasn't Epstein - it was Salandria who was in the audience at the time of a talk given by Kaplan.

If I may venture another thought about Kaplan's ~~effort~~ efforts in the field of writing such as books defending the use of pot. There may be some purpose in this and that is endearment of liberals and students to his side because of his taking a supposed controversial stand when he ought "to know better". But it is as Lenny Bruce once wisely observed: Pot will become legalized sooner or later precisely because lawyers (and professors of law) are smoking the weed already.

By the way, I received a copy of your book for which I should like to thank you. I am busy now making extensive notes on your work for book reviews in local underground papers here. Naturally, you'll receive a copy of all such reviews they print.

Now about my efforts to contact Jim Eason. I called his home phone during the day but it has since become disconnected and there was no new phone number. This indicates to me that he has moved but as to where I cannot say. If you call the KGO studio during the day Jim is not there and since I didn't want to leave my work phone during the day my only recourse is to have him call at night but that is when he has his talk show. So I have been unsuccessful in reaching him. As for Harv Morgan I did not call him but I feel sure that when I call him this coming weekend he may be able to help out in lining up some programs.

I am not giving up on Jim, however. I'll write a personal letter to his old address and ask him either to call me or write me at my new address. (I don't have a phone yet but next week a friend of mine will ~~xxx~~ stay in my apartment for a day to have my phone installed which is the reason I have not ~~xxxx~~ yet had a phone put in. As soon as I do I'll let you know the number. I can still be reached in an emergency at my friend, Tom's, for he will forward any messages to me in case people cannot reach me at my new address).

Enclosed you'll find an interesting item in this past week's Sunday Chronicle & Examiner which sounds made up of whole cloth but I'll ~~PASS~~ it along for your use. It's about Ray's escape from prison and it is, to use the current vernacular, outasite.

I don't know how well your book is going out here on the West coast but your book is being put on prominent display in the ones I frequent. One book store dealer I discussed your book with said that he believed the \$10 price would discourage sales but he did point out to me that he ordered the book because he thought it would sell.

I'm anxious to see what the NY Review and the National Enquirer will do with your book. Don't be surprised if the NY Review does a somewhat favorable one and a succession of letters to the editor follows (which are sometimes more interesting than the reviews).

Yesterday I received a very nice letter from Gary S whom I haven't heard from in almost two years. He seems to be enjoying his work which makes me happy to know for I consider Gary a really great guy to know.

In case you're interested in knowing something that I recently read: the producer of the film, "Andromeda Strain", Robert Wise is working on a film (or at least it is in the imagination state) to deal with the "incredible, inspired craziness in the area of government snooping which Sen. Sam Ervin has been recently investigating". Perhaps you could contact him and offer some illuminating episodes. (Is Ervin aware that Wise is toying with this theme? If not, it might be a good idea if you clued him in on this). Perhaps you could even bend Wise's ear about the possibility of making a movie based on your book. I know ~~xxx~~ that if I were out there with you, Hal, I'd be doing my best to get him to listen to us. What do you say?

Better close now and see if I can round up some stamps to meet the new postage requirements.

Regard to your wife and best to you.

Your friend,

Hal

Hal